



MEMORANDUM

TO: University Senate

FROM: Maurie McInnis
President

DATE: December 7, 2020

SUBJECT: President's Report

I. COVID-19 MATTERS

Below are noteworthy updates and actions related to our COVID-19 efforts:

- **Reminders**
 - Individuals who have traveled must follow quarantine protocols outlined in the [HR Update on Travel, Testing and Quarantine](#), and follow NYS COVID-19 travel advisory details, FAQs and updates on the [New York State Department of Health website](#).
 - For those who have traveled out of state, you must fill out the [New York Traveler Health Form](#) upon entering New York State. This will prompt specific guidance from the Department of Health. Also, please be sure to report any out-of-state travel on the [CampusClear app](#).
 - On-campus COVID-19 surveillance testing for employees and students continues. Additional information, including registration information, is available [here](#).

- **Pooled Testing Information Now Available on the COVID-19 Dashboard**

The COVID-19 dashboard has been keeping us all up-to-date on the number of positive COVID cases, quarantine information, campus density and more. With pooled saliva testing taking place at more locations and helping us stop the spread of COVID-19, we have now added that information to our dashboard. Our enhanced COVID-19 dashboard is available [here](#).

II. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE UPDATE

As you know, Phase 2 of SBI began in early October with the formation of the Financial Sustainability Steering Committee and the five-focused task forces. More than 120 faculty and staff have been engaged from the beginning.

The first step of our work has been focused on definition and design – learning from various subject matter experts regarding the current state of affairs from both an opportunity and challenge

perspective and defining the specific scope of work that will guide each Task Force's work. This step has been completed.

We are now in step two, which is focused on identifying priorities which will be submitted to Executive Leadership later this month.

As we move into phase three—analysis and validation – we will begin to conduct due diligence on each of the potential opportunities. We anticipate multiple and various opportunities for campus engagement and feedback—whether that is through issue-specific surveys, participation in “focus group” type meetings, or directly supporting the work of the various working groups.

For those who want to learn more about the various Task Forces, information about these groups has been recently updated, so please take a look at the [financial sustainability website](#) for more details.

As a reminder, tomorrow, I will be hosting a Campus Conversation at 2:30 along with Rose Martinelli to provide an update on our strategic budget initiative and our plans for the coming year. I hope you will join me there.

And finally, in mid- to late- January, we will be holding five, separate zoom campus conversations with Rose Martinelli and the co-chairs of each of the task forces. This will be an opportunity to go into the work of each of these task forces in far more detail, including the progress they are making. It will also be an opportunity to answer questions or concerns you may have.

I hope you can join our Campus Conversation tomorrow.

III. NEW SUPERCOMPUTER INSTALLED

The Institute for Advanced Computational Science (IACS) at Stony Brook University has installed a computer system employing the same processor technology as the fastest and most power efficient supercomputer in the world, the Fugaku system at Japan's RIKEN Center for Computational Science. The new computer is named Ookami (wolf in Japanese) and is run by IACS in partnership with the Center for Computational Research at the University at Buffalo. The system offers the potential to significantly transform computational scientific research.

IV. STONY BROOK/BNL TEAM WINS DOE PROJECT MANAGEMENT AWARD

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded the Stony Brook University/BNL U.S. ATLAS Phase I Detector Upgrade team with the Secretary's Achievement Award. The upgrade is one of only three to be honored by the DOE for project management excellence. The U.S. ATLAS Phase I Detector Upgrade was a \$44 million effort, jointly supported by DOE and the National Science Foundation, to build modern and more efficient electronics for ATLAS, providing the experiment with new and improved functionalities such as higher data collection rates.

V. ADVANCEMENT UPDATE

Since the start of the 2021 fiscal year, \$21 million has been generously pledged or contributed by 5,500 donors. Their investments in our students, research, healthcare and campus programs provide critical support, helping to elevate the University. Generous contributions since the last update include:

- \$8.39 million toward the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics Endowment
- \$500,000 planned gift intention for endowed student scholarships
- \$200,000 toward Centre ValBio Rainforest Conservation
- \$155,000 gifts and pledges to support the College of Arts and Sciences
- \$100,000 pledge toward cancer research
- \$100,000 in planned gift intentions toward an endowed research fund in Chemistry

VI. INDIVIDUAL ACCOLADES

- The Gordon Bell Special Prize for High Performance Computing-Based COVID-19 Research was awarded to **Carlos Simmerling**, Marsha Laufer Endowed Professor of Physical and Quantitative Biology, Professor of Chemistry and Associate Director of the Laufer Center, along with a team of scientists. The award recognizes “outstanding research achievement towards the understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic through the use of high-performance computing.” The winning team centered their investigation on the virus’ “spike” protein that enables it to infect human cells.
- The Institute for AI-Driven Discovery and Innovation has had seven papers accepted at the Conference and Workshop on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS). Stony Brook researchers whose papers were accepted include: **Chao Chen** (Department of Biomedical Informatics), **Minh Haoui Nguyen** (Department of Computer Science), **Michael Ryoo** (Department of Computer Science), **Dimitris Samaras** (Department of Computer Science), and **Il Memming Park** (Renaissance School of Medicine, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Neurobiology and Behavior).
- Stony Brook University researchers, together with SBU-affiliated startup Superclean Glass Inc., have received the R&D 100 Award from R&D World magazine. Every year the magazine selects the 100 most innovative products that exemplify revolutionary advances in science and innovation. The team included SBU researchers **Shrish Patel** and **Dr. Victor Veerasamy**, together with the company-affiliated **Dr. Alexander Orlov and Jim Smith**. The electrostatic-based self-cleaning technology that was recognized for the award will revolutionize the deployment of solar plants in desert regions.
- **Ijeoma Opara**, assistant professor in the School of Social Welfare, has received an Early Independence Award (EIA) from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for a project addressing substance use and mental health among urban youth ages 13 to 21. The award includes a five-year \$1.84 million grant. Managed by the NIH Common Fund, an EIA funds early-stage investigators and provides an opportunity for exceptional junior scientists who recently received their doctoral degree to move immediately into independent research positions.

- **Kedar Kirane**, assistant professor in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences' Department of Mechanical Engineering, whose research focuses on heterogeneous composite materials, has received the 2020 American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) ORR Early Career Award.
- **Stephen Schwartz**, adjunct professor at Stony Brook University and a senior scientist emeritus at the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory, has received the International Aerosol Research Assembly's 2020 International Aerosol Fellow Award. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to aerosol science and technology through research, technical development, education and service.
- **Jenna Sung**, a doctoral student in the College of Arts and Sciences Department of Psychology, has been selected for the newest cohort of Health Policy Research Scholars, one of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's leadership programs.

VII. WINTER COMMENCEMENT

Stony Brook will celebrate Winter Commencement on **Friday, December 18 at 6:30 PM**. All candidates and their families are invited to participate in a virtual celebration that will recognize our graduates and confer degrees. Please visit the Commencement [website](#) for more information.

VIII. RECENT EVENTS

Veterans Day Ceremony

The 2020 Veterans Day Ceremony took place on Wednesday, November 11 in a virtual format. The ceremony honored all students, alumni, faculty, staff, and families who have served or are currently serving in the United States Armed Forces.

2020 Hispanic Heritage Month Closing Ceremony Honors Faculty/Staff & Students

The 31st annual closing ceremony for Hispanic Heritage Month took place on Monday, November 2 via Zoom. The Awards ceremony marked the end of a month-long celebration that served to celebrate, inspire and connect Latinx students, leaders in the classroom, and community members. Keynote speaker **Mel-Pilar Espailat**, SBU alumna and medical science liaison at Takeda Pharmaceutical Company, spoke about her professional journey and the importance of mentors in her life and the lives of others.

SBU Hosts Second Annual Diversity Leadership Conference

The 2nd annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference: "Ignite the Student Leader in You" was held virtually this year. The conference centered on diversity and the responsibilities of the next generation of leaders. NYS Assembly Speaker **Carl E. Heastie**, a Stony Brook alumnus, was this year's keynote speaker. Heastie spoke about the importance of being a leader who advocates for diversity and inclusion. Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students **Rick Gatteau** moderated a conversation about diversity and what it means to be an inclusive leader with student panelists **Jac Dambrosio**, **Rashawn Davis**, and **Maya Brown**. During the conference, **Huntley Spencer**, president of the Undergraduate Student Government, and **Anand Aiyer**, president of the

Graduate Student Organization, delivered a call to action and asked students to take initiative on campus and to become leaders who have an everlasting impact in the world.

IX. ATHLETICS UPDATE¹

- Women's Basketball was the first Stony Brook team to compete in 259 days. The defending America East champions hosted Fordham at the Island Federal Arena on November 25. Their 20-game home court winning streak came to an end in the 2020-21 season opener despite a furious comeback after intermission. Point guard **Asiah Dingle** was recognized as the first America East Player of the Week after averaging 15.5 points and 5.5 rebounds in two games against Fordham and No. 23 Syracuse.
- Men's Basketball opened their season on December 1 at Saint Peter's (final score was 82-68). The team returns to play at home against Fairfield on December 4, followed by road games against St. John's on December 6 and Hofstra on December 9.
- Per NCAA guidelines, both basketball teams are subject to COVID-19 testing three times per week.
- As of November 30, the yearlong Believe in the Seawolves fundraising campaign has generated more than \$209,000 in support of Stony Brook Athletics.

¹ As of December 1.